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AUTHOR	Bethell, Hal
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ABSTRACT

Education has been a significant preoccupation of the British Broadcasting Company's (BBC) Local Radio since its outset in 1967. Several features are noteworthy. First, there is an educator on every station's staff. Five hundred series a year, involving 4000 various programs, are offered, and audiences are large and educational efforts still growing. Second, there is a partnership between education and broadcasting. Teachers work with stations and stations cooperate with teacher training institutions and Teachers' Centers. Third, local programing dominates. The School Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom vests responsibility for programing in Local Education Panels; local needs are assessed and programs directed at them. Fourth, benefits to the classroom derive from bringing voices from the community to students, by allowing children to express their opinions on familiar topics, and by showing students the outside world. Fifth, adult education is served because students are attracted to programs of which they were previously unaware. All in all, the BBC Local Radio effort helps technology to serve eduation. It is accessible to the public, blurs the distinction between producer and user, and fosters the belief that radio is a facility to be used by the community. (PB)

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A COMBINED OPERATION

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Education and BBC Local Radio A Combined Operation

by Hal Bethell
BBC Local Radio Education Organiser

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8 November 1972

Any small boy, or perhaps the envelope that brings this publication to you, will confirm that 1972 is the fiftieth anniversary of British broadcasting. Half a century ago this month, the first station of what was at that time the British Broadcasting Company was brought into service in London. It was called 2LO. Shortly, eighteen others such as 5IT, 2ZY and 5NO were to begin transmissions from Birmingham, Manchester and Newcastle-upon-Tyne. By the end of '24, a score of stations, local in nature, were on the air. They were the growth points for the immensely complex developments which have been taking plac in broadcasting ever since. These early stations with their antique designations were before long overtaken and enlarged by the march of broadcasting events; they were, however, to be rejuvenated at a later stage in fresh form. 'Life begins at forty' runs the song and, just ten years ago, the Pilkington Committee of Inquiry brought into public debate a concept of local radio which the BBC had been studying and refining in the preceding years. Eventually, the idea became a reality and five years ago this month – on 8 November 1967 – the first of the BBC's local radio stations was opened in Leicester. Since then, a further nineteen have been opened in other towns. Although the oldest among them is only five years old, these stations now have over fifty years of local broadcasting experience behind them, so, for us too, 1972 is a special year giving cause for celebration and pause for reflection.

Taking education as one aspect only of the local radio operation, this booklet sets out to demonstrate that our early years have been well spent and that, for the BBC, as for Sophie Tucker, maturity gave rise to at least one fresh impetus, rich in energy, promise and achievement.

Education has been a major preoccupation of BBC Local Radio from the outset. Indeed, in one sense, the entire social purpose of local radio, as conceived by the BBC, may be described as educational. As it is a central concern of every civilised community, so too must any agency serving the aims of such a community treat it as an area of human activity demanding special regard and support. It has been so with us. Every one of our stations has an educationist on its production staff and allocates air-time for local educational purposes. It is interesting to note that, the opening apart, the very first programme broadcast by BBC Local Radio was for school children!

However, in the pre-natal days of BBC Local Radio in 1967 and earlier, there was a great deal of scepticism about the need for locally

produced and locally broadcast educational material. Some felt that existing provision was adequate and that a local supplement could hardly be justified.

What the sceptics overlooked, or dismissed, was the argument put forward by the proponents of educational local radio that what was at issue was a *new* form of educational broadcasting communion differing from the orthodox fundamentally in the basis of its proposed operation, in the circumstances attending it and in the methods which it planned to adopt. Advocates of the scheme argued that local radio held out for education a range of fresh possibilities, the like of which could never be achieved by a linear extension of the BBC's mainline educational provision. They were talking of the possibility of energising directly the great funds of talent and professional skill residing in the teaching profession. They were talking of a broadcasting-mutual for education in which, in moderately sized communities, needs could be determined and accurately matched by the efforts of teachers and broadcasters working together. They were talking of broadcasters becoming directly and personally involved with the communities they serve. There was talk, too, of ways in which different educational groups might sense a new kinship and affinity in pursuit of common aims in educational broadcasting. Nineteen sixty-seven was a great year for fine words and heady talk! Words such as 'participation', 'access', 'involvement', which had even then acquired a fashionable cachet, came to have a new certainty and stature in our speculations and beliefs. At that time they could only be beliefs and as such they were shared by all working in local radio, whether in education or not, because they were taken to be of general application in many quarters of society.

The testing-time drew near and talk, however grand, was no longer enough. It needed to be converted into action in an organisational framework which would serve the overriding aims of the plan and which would secure responsible progress towards its achievement.

So it was that the School Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdom – an autonomous body which stands sponsor to all BBC broadcasts to schools – vested its responsibilities in locally formed Educational Panels which were to be broadly representative of all educational interests in the areas. In practice, these Panels include both schools and further education interests. Invited for their local educational stature, Panel members guide the stations in their educational efforts. To the Education Producer, whose task it is to devise an

output mirroring the needs and priorities of the area he serves and drawing upon many contributory skills and enthusiasms, their specialised knowledge, local connections and professional support have been invaluable.

The funds available to finance such an ambitious scheme were, at best, modest. They were sufficient for an educational presence to be maintained on the local air and for an indication to be given, in broadcasting terms, of the approximate nature of what might, in due course, be achieved in fuller measure. Sufficient for our stall to be set out and our goods surveyed! Beyond this point, it was believed, extension would take place naturally if we won local acceptance of our plea for a common aim in educational broadcasting.

The nexus we sought with the world of education needed to be a professional rather than a commercial one. We offered, as the basis for a practical working relationship, the concept of a productive partnership to which each party would bring its own special attributes. The BBC would put in its accumulated skills in broadcasting, its willingness to share these skills with others, an allocation of the station's general and supportive facilities and the salaried services of its Education Producer. To match this, we hoped that the educational world would provide specialised guidance, direct professional co-operation in the preparation of educational broadcasts and associated materials, and in the promotion, distribution and evaluation of these products. This was a scheme which, recognising the separate worth of distinct funds of experience, advocated that they should be pooled in the making of broadcasting an effective local educational resource.

By summer 1968 the first eight stations were in action for an experimental period, with substantial local financial support from their host constituencies. When the experiment was over, the Government announced that further stations could be opened but that their basic operation was to be entirely financed by the BBC itself. Twelve more stations were brought into operation and at that point the Government called a halt to further expansion of the service.

The stations were opened at intervals and the last one went on the air towards the end of April 1971. The older stations have had five years now and the younger ones eighteen months to test their ideas in practice. Obviously, later stations have been able to build on the experiences of earlier ones and so have been in many ways able to move up through the gears more quickly, but acceleration and direc-

tion of travel depend for all stations very much upon the nature of local response. It is fundamental to our thinking that this should be so. This accounts substantially for the observable differences of emphasis as between stations. Some have a highly developed schools service; others stress adult education much more. Many stations have a range of programming which reflects a general acceptance locally of the new approach to educational broadcasting.

How have these stations fared educationally? Have their ideas and their actions been able to stand up to the scrutiny of professional educators? Was their early faith justified? Has their existence made any mark on the educational scene? These are some of the questions which should now be put.

First of all, what has been done; what sort of output do we have; how extensive is it in scope and in volume? This term – autumn 1972 – we are together transmitting some 180 educational series; over the year there will be around 500 such series being broadcast. Such an array cannot be described in a publication of this sort but perhaps a few examples will show that the range of programme material is very wide indeed. (Fuller details are available on request; please see address list on page 20.) *Health on Teesside* is an adult education series involving Medical Officers of Health and other local specialists in a study of the Teesside environment. The series has been produced in conjunction with the Department of Adult Education and Extra-Mural Studies of Leeds University. BBC Radio Brighton's *Story-Music* for five-year-olds involves close co-operation with the local Nursery Training Centre. *Black Studies* is a BBC Radio London/ I.L.E.A. series for secondary schools and colleges, designed to accompany social history courses. *Down to the Sea* from BBC Radio Newcastle is a series of local environmental studies for children of middle school age. BBC Radio Medway has a highly detailed thirty-programme series on *The History of Kent* involving many eminent local historians.

In giving these examples and figures of somewhere in the region of 4,000 different educational programmes on BBC Local Radio annually, I am not saying in effect 'Never mind the quality, feel the width!', for, of course, it is the quality of the communication alone that really counts and this is sharply assessed by the listener subjectively at child level and by the intermediary (the teacher) in his objective professional valuations.

Looking, then, first to the schools side of things, it is apparent that

our programmes are finding a place in the respect of teachers and in the interest of children. Writing on a series for Sheffield remedial classes, a teacher commented, 'I have never seen these children so keen on any work. Their faces positively shine. . .' A Darlington infants' teacher reporting on the Radio Teesside programme for that age-group said, 'The children have all enjoyed the programmes so much that they have written these letters to tell you so. This has not been an "exercise". The children have written because they wanted to and you will notice that the appeal has varied according to age and interest.' A Stoke teacher wrote, 'I have just spent another absorbing day at school with my class of thirty-eight children working on a multitude of different topics all springing from your broadcasts on local history. . . Days of such complete activity and interest are all too few. . . A day when everyone seems to be giving maximum effort and obtaining such full and spontaneous satisfaction is really a day to remember.'

There is certainly an appeal for all ages in being able to relate subject-matter to what is familiar in the locality. It is an immensely valuable quality inherent in the nature of local radio that we can do so. We can use familiar instances, refer to well-known places and incidents and, perhaps most important of all, present our material in a homely and sympathetic local style. As one Newcastle child said of a programme, 'I liked it because there was Geordie-talking in it and there was Raby Street in it, and it's best if you know the area.'

Through radio, neighbourhood people with a view to express can be brought into a classroom by proxy and often in a much more lively manner than if they were there in person. Arthur Wood, one of our Education Producers, puts it like this: 'There are a lot of things we can do in radio which are very, very hard to arrange in the school situation. It's well known that getting people in from the local community to present their viewpoints in the classroom is highly desirable but not always effective. Very often those you'd most like to hear can't put themselves across in a classroom. We are able to bring many voices in who normally would never make any inroads into the classroom setting. I'm thinking of the man who looks after the furnace. I'm thinking of the miner who wouldn't know how to speak to a large and bubbling group of eleven-year-olds. I'm thinking of the lady who makes the cups in the pottery who may well be at ease with her daughter but would feel very unhappy speaking to a large group of fourteen-year-old girls. In radio their personalities come through.'

Also, children's own views in discussion are, sadly, often more freely expressed in a recording context than in class discussion. Seconded teachers have often commented on the freedom with which children speak up outside the class confines. Frequently, therefore, child opinion becomes a lively and valuable component in our programmes.

Emmeline Garnett, formerly Director of the Nuffield Curriculum Resources Development Project in Leicester and Leicestershire, said in her book *Area Resource Centre* (Arnold): 'A radio station is a wonderful local resource for classroom teaching. It can produce different kinds of material otherwise unattainable, but particularly its strong point is the presentation of the real voice of real people which gives a depth and colour to local study that can be attained in no other way.' She was referring to a BBC Radio Leicester series which was backed by materials of many sorts, produced by members of the Development Project.

In passing, it is worth commenting that the very contact with an outside organisation (thousands of children have visited BBC Local Radio stations and taken part in programmes; indeed, sometimes they have made them!) has a beneficial effect on children in that it brings them into touch with the real world of affairs. When their work is broadcast or their opinion sought it is a recognition of worth of the individual child, an emblem of human regard. Looking back recently through a volume of Teachers' Notes 1927, I read that 'Drawings, notes, essays and lists of specimens collected by the school may be sent to Savoy Hill for inspection and commendation at the microphone but in no case must more than six papers be sent up from any one school'! It's an old school broadcasting tradition and one, in its new form, we keep up, although we would not limit the number of contributions to six! Many stations make a special feature of broadcasting children's work, of giving children an opportunity to come in and talk. BBC Radio Derby recently had an excellent exhibition of art work stimulated by a radio series displayed in co-operation with a local Teachers' Centre. Many stations keep 'open house' for their children's leisure-time programmes and everybody is welcome!

But for all the children appear to value the programmes we put out, or at least most of them because, of course, we have had our failures as was inevitable in breaking new ground, we must never forget that the children do not even hear the programmes unless, first of all, the teacher is himself persuaded that the material is likely to be of some

value. School audience figures indicate how far our provision has been able to prove its own worth in the critical ears of practitioners. Many readers will recall the recently publicised figures from Stoke relating to Spring Term '71 and arising from a survey conducted there by the Chief Education Officer. Briefly, they showed that in the City of Stoke alone the BBC Radio Stoke schools audience had reached a level of nearly 13,000 children each week. In Durham, two surveys, 1971 and 1972, conducted by Durham County Council, showed respectively that 116 and 166 schools received programmes and 221 and 272 series were being followed, giving an audience of over 8,000 weekly, even if only one group of thirty within a school listened.

At BBC Radio Humberside recently, I found a sizeable operation in progress dispatching notes to schools. Four thousand Pupils' Notes for one music series, 230 Teachers' Notes to accompany literature programmes, 270 Teachers' Notes for a primary school creative stimulus series to culminate in an anthology programme and an exhibition. All these notes had been specifically ordered by individual class teachers. In Derby, where our youngest station operates, 211 classes in 100 local schools follow one or more of the series in the station's educational output. Seven hundred is the number of schools who are known to be listening *regularly* to the educational output of BBC Radio Merseyside. This is out of a total of 3,000 schools in the station's transmission area and does not take into account the number of schools occasionally following their educational series. In Leicester, one series alone (*Let's Have Another Story*) for infant and junior schools and devised to help with the teaching of English as a second language has a following of at least fifty classes in the city (1,500 children). At BBC Radio Sheffield, if any series for secondary schools fails to find an audience in less than 80 per cent of local schools, then something is considered to be wrong. More commonly, 90 per cent will be reached and sometimes even 100 per cent!

After so short and strenuous a history, we look upon such figures as immensely encouraging. We believe that proximity to our audience, free access to our consumers and a policy of trying to blur the distinction between consumers and producers have much to do with the progress we have made. It is a question of confidence and of mutual respect and trust between teachers and broadcasters. There is nothing new in this. Walford Davies, a generation ago, appealed to teachers saying, 'Please communicate freely with me! Confidence, keen but friendly criticism and a working partnership between us are the three

chief needs.' It may not be a new ideal; it is certainly one that the broadcaster has to work for.

It doesn't happen overnight and without effort that, for example, every school in Sheffield has now a voluntary correspondent to act as a two-way channel of communication between radio station and school, taking in and giving out ideas and reporting back on the value of the materials transmitted. It isn't glamour that attracts groups such as Associations of Teachers of English to work voluntarily on broadcast series as in Hull or 120 teachers to form subject panels in Merseyside to work in their own time on the creation of programme schemes under the chairmanship of a member of the local voluntary Education Panel. It is no mere whim on the part of twenty-seven L.E.A.s that this year we have some eighty teachers working on secondment with the Education Producers of our stations. It is not without due cause that ten L.E.A.s make financial grants to their local stations for educational programming or that the Liverpool and Wallasey L.E.A.s have entered into an agreement with the BBC for joint equipping of the separate education studio at BBC Radio Merseyside.

In all these ways and many more, we are working in daily and very close contact with our teaching colleagues. In all these ways we see evidence of the partnership concept, upon which we base our educational commitment, coming energetically to life.

L.E.A.s have contributed facilities of many sorts but most widespread among them has become the practice of seconding teachers to BBC Local Radio stations to work alongside the Education Producers in the production of programmes for local schools. There are many forms of secondment; in some cases, a teacher may be seconded for, say, a day a week for a limited period of time to work on a particular series; in another area there may be term-long secondments; sometimes the arrangement will be for an even longer period. At BBC Radio Bristol, for example, the City L.E.A. has seconded three teachers for a total of eight teacher-days per week. Manchester L.E.A. seconds a teacher full-time for a year; Salford a teacher full-time for a term. Oxford City seconds a head of an Adult Education Centre for one day per week, and also a teacher for two days per week. Berkshire County L.E.A. releases a primary school head for one day per week and an adult education lecturer for half a day each week. Also, the Oxford College of Further Education has one of its lecturers working at BBC Radio Oxford for one day each week. The I.L.E.A. has

seconded two teachers full-time to Radio London for two years and also agrees to the part-time secondment of the principal of an Adult Education Institute to work on the series *Time to Spare*.

During their secondments, teachers acquire the skills of a producer and already many have shown themselves sufficiently adept to be able to produce programmes in their own right under the executive supervision of the Education Producer. On return to school, when secondments finish, they will have acquired experiences and abilities which will benefit them in their professional work and in the use they make of the facilities available to them.

On calculating the numbers of teachers who have acquired this experience, one recognises a substantial form of in-service training, quite apart from the contribution made in converting broadcasting into a bespoke local service. BBC Radio Merseyside, for instance, takes up to eighteen teachers a year on relatively short secondments of a month at a time, and BBC Radio Derby has given weekend training courses to thirty teachers in the last few months. BBC Radio Solent has, at the time of writing, just completed a similar course. Altogether, since the start of BBC Local Radio, at least 200 teachers must in this way have acquired professional experience in audio production techniques. At least an equivalent number will have had a moderate introduction to the skills and ideas involved and will have been shown how to interpret them into relevant professional practice in schools. These figures do not include the seventy or eighty teachers who contributed to the success of BBC Radio Bristol's and BBC Radio Leeds' emergency schools of the air, broadcast in times of national crisis brought about by industrial disputes. On the most conservative basis, I estimate that 2,500 teachers have, in one way or another, contributed in a creative fashion to the educational activities of our local stations. The actual number could well be twice as large.

Bognor Regis College of Education, with the approval of the Department of Education and Science, has established a course for the training of teachers in audio techniques with BBC Local Radio particularly in mind. Our stations have been able to co-operate by taking these teachers on working attachments as a part of their course. A promising relationship is also developing between BBC Local Radio and the Channel Isles School Radio Service which also operates on a basis of teacher-secondment.

In addition to the interweaving of interests which secondment brings about, there are strong bonds between local stations and

Teachers' Centres in areas where these are an active force in the educational community. A BBC Radio Leicester series has elaborate accompanying material such as wall-charts, sequence cards etc. devised at and produced in a local Teachers' Centre. BBC Radio Merseyside's *French for Middle Forms*, in which a language structure is built around vocabulary and sounds which are part of the culture of Merseyside children, has been prepared in conjunction with the Wallasey L.E.A. through their Teachers' Development Centre. In Darlington, arrangements are being made between the L.E.A. and the local radio station for a direct line connection to be installed from the Teachers' Centre to the studio. This is being planned as a joint venture. A similar facility may soon exist between BBC Radio Solent and the University of Southampton. In Merseyside again, there is the closest co-operation between the radio station and the Childwall Project, based at the Walton Resources Centre, working together in the production of materials in the humanities field for direct use in schools and for broadcasting. The City of Leeds L.E.A. has agreed the secondment of a teacher who spends part of her time at the radio station and part at the Teachers' Centre. It is hoped that this joint appointment idea will strengthen connections between the two establishments.

For an understanding of how these liaisons are viewed from the other side of the bridge, let me quote to you from material being collected by BBC Radio Derby for a programme on education in BBC Local Radio. The speaker is Mr G. M. A. Harrison, Sheffield's Chief Education Officer:

> We saw the BBC initiative that led to the establishment of BBC Radio Sheffield from the very beginning as likely to be a valuable thing for the local education service. We were very conscious at the time of the growing tide of curriculum development and of the necessity for the L.E.A. to be deeply involved in the in-service training of teachers. We saw the local radio idea as a powerful instrument in this and, indeed, it very quickly proved its worth in this respect. We seconded one of our most active advisers to the local radio station for half his time for a couple of terms . . . and he was quite convinced in his report of the enormous cost-effectiveness of the thing. For the expenditure of a few hundred pounds, one was reaching thousands of children every day with extremely effective material and the influence this had on teachers in their knowledge of the way other teachers worked and the enthusiasm and inno-

vation that resulted seemed to us to be valuable out of all proportion to the effort that we put into it... Whatever initial doubts there may have been about the quality of the work that a local radio station could produce with education broadcasts have been quite dispelled. The quality of material put out is quite first-class and this has had an enormous influence over four and a half thousand teachers in the city.

No surprise, perhaps, that Mr Harrison should now be seeking to spread these benefits into the adult education area of his department's work. There are currently advertisements in the press for an Adult Tutor in Sheffield whose duties would include 'the investigation of the use of local radio for adult education and preparation of material for broadcasting'. Also, there is a vacancy advertised for two Adult Education Advisers, one of whose duties would be to 'investigate the educational needs of adult groups and communities in the City and the development of special courses, new provisions and links with BBC Radio Sheffield'.

I have spoken so far almost exclusively of materials produced for schools' use, but of our current term's output almost half the 180 series are intended principally for adult audiences. Just as we work closely with schools' interest in the production of schools' material, so we seek involvement with local adult education providers in devising our adult output. BBC Radio Nottingham, for example, has throughout had particularly strong connections with the Nottingham University Department of Adult Education and the W.E.A. and has produced forty series of adult education programmes, the majority of which were made in co-operation with these bodies. Commenting, Alan Thornton of the University has said that:

(*a*) much of the material produced has been of such quality that it is used in all kinds of teaching situations;
(*b*) his staff has gained immensely valuable experience in adapting teaching methods to a rudimentary systems approach;
(*c*) they have been able, through local radio, to make contact with students who would not otherwise have joined their classes;
(*d*) the stimulus of local radio work has encouraged them to set up their own recording studio.

Again, as a joint undertaking with the West Lancashire and Cheshire Branch of the W.E.A., BBC Radio Merseyside broadcast a series on the changing patterns of authority as they affected ordinary residents

of the Liverpool Educational Priority Area. This series, *Living Today*, has been separately reported in a BBC Local Radio Education booklet of that title. Brian Groombridge, in his book *Television and the People* (Penguin Education), also describes this work in some detail because of what he describes as its effectiveness and more general validity. A principal characteristic of this scheme was that it involved people going out actively to find their audiences and to help 'to exorcise that persistent hobgoblin – the myth of apathy and lack of concern among lower-working-class parents', to use Eric Midwinter's phrase. Bob Jones, the Education Producer, commented: 'When you see forty men and women talking about common problems in the Seven Stars pub off the Scotland Road, you feel that education can be brought back to the people!' One of the tutors involved noted that, in her view, the radio series was an excellent means of challenging feelings of inadequacy among her group and that she counted it a triumph that one of her members said that she now knew that there was more to the ordinary person than meets the eye. A new series of similar provenance called *Everybody Likes Saturday Night* goes on the air this term. It deals with different uses of leisure, and groups will each go along to a place of entertainment which they would not normally attend.

Referring to what has already been said about sympathetic modes of presentation which have proved so effective in school broadcasting, it is easy to imagine that these qualities can have a similar effect among adults, particularly among those adults who are not accustomed to abstractions, who tend to see issues in personal terms and who have a low level of critical awareness. We feel that in BBC Local Radio we have a particularly strong hand when it comes to working educationally for the 'forgotten people' in the adult population. By this I mean the educationally under-privileged majority of adults whose needs are by-passed by the greater part of the existing adult provision. So much, we feel, can be done through the medium of local radio to make education relevant to local circumstances. Recently, the International Conference on Adult Education in Tokyo concluded that one of the tasks for the Second Development Decade of the United Nations should be to seek out ways of effectively serving the educational needs of these people throughout the world. The conference recognised that, through the mass media, it is now possible to reach people no matter where they live. Almost nowhere, it was held, had the full potential of the mass media been enlisted in the ser-

vice of adult education, either in industrialised or in developing countries. Many delegates pointed out that despite the mystique of television, radio remains a more economical and effective medium of education.

Most stations could tell of listener reactions they have had which would support these views. In this situation, some L.E.A.s have seconded adult education staff to local radio stations. At BBC Radio Oxford, for example, there are three such secondees from Oxfordshire, Oxford City and the Oxford College of Education. The I.L.E.A. seconds a member of staff to BBC Radio London and also assists in another way. An I.L.E.A. press notice (8 December 1971) ran:

> Impressed by the way in which BBC Radio London's *Time to Spare* series has stimulated interest in adult education in London and has encouraged listeners to take part in it, the I.L.E.A. Further Education Sub-Committee has decided to help out with the production costs of the programmes. . . Mr Alec Grant, Chairman of the Further Education Sub-Committee, said today, 'In our evidence to the Russell Committee we stressed the desirability of attracting into adult education the many thousands of Londoners who are at present untouched by it. BBC Radio London is helping to do just that – and we are grateful for it.' Mr Grant added that he was particularly appreciative of the service which the *Time to Spare* series offered to the handicapped and the housebound.

On the promotional level of operation, many stations play an active part. BBC Radio Birmingham runs a series describing adult education activities in the run-up period to enrolment. BBC Radio Oxford has a regular information service called *Adults Only*. All stations publicise local adult education work in one form or another, very often by interviews slipped into general broadcasting at peak listening times. This is the place to put in a mention, too, of the vast amount of educational reportage handled by the stations' news desks. A survey of any day's output of news would yield a sizeable crop of responsibly handled educational stories. Frequently, there will be stories of achievements which would otherwise go unsung. In the field of education about education, there are a number of series being broadcast which deal with local educational issues presented in such a way as to be helpful to parents – and also to teachers! As illustration, there is BBC Radio Solent's *Concourse*, Newcastle's *Enquiry*, Manchester's *Education File*, London's *Your Child at School*, Brighton's *So Your Child*

is Starting School, BBC Radio Blackburn's *News from the Schools and Colleges* and *Teachers' Bookshelf* etc.

Perhaps the most interesting characteristic of our work with adults in general is the way in which we have tried to order our circumstances to allow us to meet our audiences personally, to show that the individual matters, and to work towards the defeat of the idea that the production of a radio programme is an end in itself. It's the 'open house' idea again – the idea that accessibility combined with responsiveness can make educational broadcasting an esteemed force with a momentum of its own. It can scale down the radio component in the popular imagination from being an awesome dispenser of worthy things to being merely a well-equipped and well-intentioned facility available to the collection of communities we call a town, in an attempt to bring into profitable balance the teachers and their students, the planners and the planned-for, the governors and the governed. Typical of several such programmes throughout BBC Local Radio is BBC Radio Bristol's new experimental series, *Access*, in which local groups with a view of society are invited to use two hours' transmission time in whatever way they feel would be most useful to them in stating their case to the public at large in a responsible fashion. At BBC Radio Stoke, where there is already a long history of imaginative co-operation with the Department of Adult Education at the University of Keele in exploring the possibilities of local radio in an adult education context, a very interesting venture was recently jointly undertaken. This was a series on the history of local Methodism. The programmes themselves were only one aspect of an experiment that sought to use local radio, not just as a recruiting medium for a course centred on the Adult Education Department, but as a means of getting out among the people to whom we broadcast and working with them in a series of study groups, coming together at their own times in their own meeting-places. The meetings themselves produced fresh materials for further programmes and they also produced sufficient personal historic treasures from Methodist history for an exhibition to be held of 1,000 such items. Five hundred visitors came along to meet and to talk, some bringing with them further items and recollections. More valuable usable and archivable material was recorded. Local radio was able to act as an epicentre for a radiating pattern of social contacts and activities which would not otherwise have taken place.

Such a large-scale and complex culmination to a series was only

made possible by the fact that BBC Radio Stoke has acquired a community studio seating sixty-five to seventy people. In this studio recently, a follow-up meeting was held to a series called *Milk and Grass*, produced in conjunction with the Staffordshire Agricultural Development and Advisory Service.

The series had made enough impact to hold seventy farmers from neighbouring counties in agricultural debate from seven until eleven in the evening! Perhaps this is one occasion where the well-worn cliché 'getting down to the grass roots' might be applied with some meaning to an educational enterprise! The studio also made possible the 'Open Week for Schools' last summer, during which forty-two school groups with more than fifty teachers were able to visit the studios, talk to staff, listen to programmes and look at exhibitions of children's work. Above all, it is hoped that the teachers went away aware of local radio's educational strengths.

This studio was looked upon as a capital investment in community communication and, as such, a sum of £2,000 was put into it by the City of Stoke from the £5,000 which they have now been investing in local radio for three or four years past. In a situation in which a financial subvention of this order is being made to local radio, it is especially encouraging to hear the Chief Education Officer, Mr H. Dibden, say that from his point of view every £1 invested in BBC Radio Stoke is worth £10!

To mention only the L.E.A.s, the W.E.A., and the universities is to ignore the host of other organisations with whom we work in approaching the problems of education in the broadest manner in our power, not only hoping that ways may be found of using the specialised stimuli that different groups can provide but also hoping that somehow these groups themselves may be brought nearer together in pursuit of a common aim. There are many such organisations. I will limit myself to mentioning a few whose active participation has contributed to this current term's educational output: The British Association for the Advancement of Science (BBC Radio Birmingham), the Blackburn Council of Social Service (programmes for immigrants), the Manchester Branch of St John Ambulance (first aid for teachers), the Southern Schools Science and Technology Forum (environmental studies on BBC Radio Solent), the Teesside Fire Brigade (a primary series on the use and abuse of fire – BBC Radio Teesside) and the many Youth Employment Services up and down the land who have helped to make careers programmes for school

leavers. This year nine authorities joined forces to help make such a series in conjunction with BBC Radio Birmingham. Other organisations whose contact with the work of BBC Local Radio are too numerous to specify are the Open University and the various Colleges of Education who interest themselves in local radio opportunities.

Second-stage developments have often stemmed from an initial association with local radio. Take, for example, the creation in various places of tape banks and the gradual integration of local educational broadcasting with resource centre operation, the number of schools now thinking of setting up their own simple studio facilities (six in Merseyside alone), the number of authorities also planning to set up tape production centres and an undoubted increase in the ability of teachers experienced in radio work to use audio facilities more effectively in their own schools. The Director-General of the BBC, Charles Curran, speaking recently on the subject 'The BBC and its Educational Commitment', drew attention to 'good equipment left lying about unused or inadequately maintained' in schools. He pointed the finger not only at teachers but also at the teachers of teachers! I was myself staggered recently to hear a College of Education lecturer say with impressive candour, 'I suppose that it's time that we in the Colleges of Education came to terms with the tape recorder!' Our experience in local radio underlines this view but through our work with teacher colleagues we know that the situation is changing for the better.

What are we to make, as broadcasters and educationists, of a situation in which hundreds of teachers and children are learning how to use audio resources creatively for their own ends, in which equipment is being extended and brought into effective productive use within the schools, in which L.E.A.s and others are becoming increasingly aware of the possibilities of 'going it alone' through the establishment of elaborate Resource Centres? Personally, I hold that we should welcome and encourage this and feel proud of any part which we may have been able to play in this development. Teachers, unlike lawyers, authors and journalists, achieve their greatest professional reward when they observe that their clients require fewer of their services. This should be equally true of teacher/broadcasters. Hans Keller, writing recently in *The Listener*, suggested contentiously that radio's well-defined end should be to make itself as superfluous as possible in any given social and individual circumstances. To the extent that we are able to encourage teachers to pool their abilities with ours in coping with the endless chain of educational challenges which the

future holds and yet, by a transference of skills, equally to encourage them to replace our services by theirs whenever educationally profitable, this is a consummation worth working for. History would speak well of us.

When at the Inter-Navex Exhibition at Olympia, the Director-General was talking in what were purely national educational broadcasting terms, he spoke of the need for 'a whole new range of skills to be learnt by those who wish to use the new technology *of which broadcasting is a part*' (my italics) and of the necessity for planning the use of broadcasts in relation to other available resources, integrating material into schemes of work and planning preparation and follow-up work. In the same exhibition hall, on the gallery outside the lecture theatre, was a display stall financed by the City of Leicester Education Authority and jointly manned by the Authority and by BBC Radio Leicester publicising the advantages which flow from the triangular relationship between teachers, Teachers' Centre and BBC Local Radio. The display was concerned with the BBC Radio Leicester series, *Let's Make Another Story*, designed to help infant and junior schools with the teaching of English as a second language. Produced by the local radio station, the series was devised and written by a local teacher-leader for language development, local children played parts in the programmes, the accompanying material in pack form (wall-chart, reader, sequence cards and games) was produced by Leicester teachers working at their Teachers' Centre and, before use, the programmes were played to and discussed by a panel of forty advisers, head teachers and class teachers. The series is currently being used by more than fifty classes in the City of Leicester.

Those of us who work in BBC Local Radio Education, teachers and broadcasters alike, believe that we have gone some way along one path towards the adoption of the new attitudes of mind which have to be cultivated if educational technology is to come into its own in a society aware of what broadcasting can do and what education needs.

With medium wave in addition to VHF available to most of our stations now, and all of them before long, and the implication that this has for our future audiences, we are looking forward to an exciting journey in congenial company towards a rewarding goal.

BBC RADIO BIRMINGHAM, Pebble Mill Road, Birmingham B5 7SO.
021-472 5141
Education Producer: Tony Glynne. VHF: 95·6; Medium Wave: 206

BBC RADIO BLACKBURN, King Street, Blackburn BB2 2EA.
Blackburn 62411
Education Producer: Derek Mills. VHF: 96·4; Medium Wave: 351

BBC RADIO BRIGHTON, Marlborough Place, Brighton BN1 1TU.
Brighton 680231
Education Producer: Chris Jones. VHF: 95·8; Medium Wave: 202

BBC RADIO BRISTOL, 3 Tyndalls Park Road, Bristol BS8 1PP.
Bristol 311111
Education Producer: Jeremy Orlebar.
VHF: 95·4; Medium Wave: 194

BBC RADIO CARLISLE, Hilltop Heights, Carlisle. (Opening 1973)
Education Producer: Geoff Coates

BBC RADIO DERBY, 56 St Helen's Street, Derby DE1 3HY.
Derby 361111
Education Producer: Peter Legge.
VHF: 96·5; date of Medium Wave to be announced.

BBC RADIO HUMBERSIDE, 9 Chapel Street, Hull HU1 3NU.
Hull 23232
Education Producer: Arnold Miller. VHF: 95·3; Medium Wave: 202

BBC RADIO LEEDS, Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 8NJ. Leeds 42131
Education Producer: Mike McGowan.
VHF: 94·6; Medium Wave: 271

BBC RADIO LEICESTER, Epic House, Charles Street, Leicester LE1 3SH. Leicester 27113
Education Producer: Paul Cobley. VHF: 95·2; Medium Wave: 188

BBC RADIO LONDON, Harewood House, Hanover Square, London W1R 0JD. 01-493 5401
Education Producer: Frances Berrigan.
VHF: 95·3; Medium Wave: 206

BBC RADIO MANCHESTER, 33 Piccadilly, Manchester M60 7BB
061-228 1991
Education Producer: Chris Walmsley.
VHF: 95·1; Medium Wave: 206

BBC RADIO MEDWAY, 30 High Street, Chatham, Kent.
Medway 46284
Education Producer: Peter Glanville.
VHF: 97·0; Medium Wave: 290

BBC RADIO MERSEYSIDE, Commerce House, 13–17 Sir Thomas Street, Liverpool L16 BS. 051-236 3355
Education Producer: Bob Jones. VHF: 95·8; Medium Wave: 202

BBC RADIO NEWCASTLE, Crestina House, Archbold Terrace, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE2 1DZ. Newcastle 814243
Education Producer: Cliff Kitney. VHF: 95·4; Medium Wave: 206

BBC RADIO NOTTINGHAM, York House, Mansfield Road, Nottingham NG1 3JB. Nottingham 47643
Education Producer: Bob Brookes.
VHF: 94·8; Medium Wave to be announced

BBC RADIO OXFORD, 242–54 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 7DW. Oxford 53411
Education Producer: Frank Hughes. VHF: 95·0; Medium Wave: 202

BBC RADIO SHEFFIELD, Ashdell Grove, 60 Westbourne Road, Sheffield S10 2QU. Sheffield 686185
Education Producer: David Sheasby.
VHF: 88·6/95·05; Medium Wave: 290

BBC RADIO SOLENT, South Western House, Canute Road, Southampton SO9 4PJ. Southampton 31311
Education Producer: John Saunders
VHF: 91·6; Medium Wave: 301

BBC RADIO STOKE-ON-TRENT, Conway House, Cheapside, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1JJ. Stoke-on-Trent 24827
Education Producer: Arthur Wood. VHF: 94·6; Medium Wave: 200

BBC RADIO TEESSIDE, 91–93 Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, Teesside TS1 5DG. Middlesbrough 48491
Education Producer: Peter Hedley. VHF: 96·6; Medium Wave: 194

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BBC LOCAL RADIO